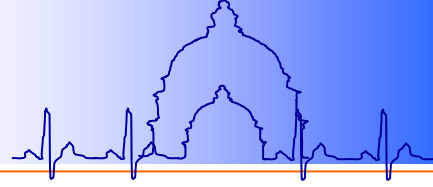




1-20-2010

The Pulse



KHPA News and Events

Governor to Speak to KHPA Board

Gov. Mark Parkinson is tentatively scheduled to speak to the KHPA Board meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 26. Meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. at the HP Enterprise Services Building, Topeka

SEHP Tobacco Cessation

State Employee Health Plan members who elected to participate in the tobacco cessation program to receive a premium discount must enroll in the program by Jan. 31.

To enroll, call toll-free, 1-888-275-1205 and select Option 3, or visit the [Health-Quest website](#) for more details.

KHPA Reaches Agreement to Preserve Customer Service Call Center

Kansas health care providers and beneficiaries in the Medicaid and Health-Wave programs will continue to have access to a toll-free number to resolve payment and billing issues, thanks to an agreement between the Kansas Health Policy Authority and its fiscal agent contractor.

HP Enterprise Services, formerly known as EDS, serves as the fiscal agent contractor for the Kansas Medicaid and HealthWave programs. The company processes claims for payments and reviews those claims for accuracy. It also conducts a number of federally mandated reviews to ensure compliance with federal Medicaid regulations.

In November, in response to budget cuts ordered by Gov. Mark Parkinson, KHPA announced plans to reduce the contract with HP by cancelling a portion of the contract that calls on HP to operate a customer service call center. It was estimated that eliminating the call center would save \$250,148.

However, after KHPA issued a notice of intent to cancel that portion of the contract, representatives of HP offered an alternative that would allow the call center to remain open. After successful negotiations between the agency and the company, both parties agreed to a contract amendment that allows the call center to stay open while reducing spending in other areas of the contract.

“This call center is vitally important, both to the health care providers who serve Medicaid patients as well as Medicaid beneficiaries,” KHPA Acting Medicaid Director Barb Langner said. “Just as one example, when a pharmacist has a patient at the counter who’s trying to get a prescription filled and, for whatever reason, the claim go through, that situation needs to get resolved right away. You don’t want to send that person home without their medications.”

The call center at HP receives an average of 250,000 calls per year. The majority of those calls involve issues that can be resolved through an automated system, but many require the assistance of a live individual who can look up an individual’s account records or help interpret regulations about covered services and procedures.

In addition to the call center operated by HP, which handles issues mainly related to billing and payments, KHPA also operates another call center for issues involving eligibility and enrollment in Medicaid and HealthWave. That call center is managed by KHPA’s Clearinghouse contractor, Policy Studies Inc. (PSI). The amended contract between KHPA and HP Enterprise Services does not affect the operation of the Clearinghouse call center.

Save the Date

KMAP Policy Meeting

Time: Wed., Jan. 20, 10 a.m.

Location: HP Enterprise Services, 6700 S Topeka Blvd., "J" St., Bldg. 283

KHPA Testimony:

Senate Ways & Means:

Andy Allison, Exec. Dir., Update on KHPA Operations

Time: Fri. Jan. 22, 10:30 a.m.

Location: Docking SOB, Room 785

KHPA Board Meeting

When: Tues., Jan. 26, 8:30 a.m.

Location: HP Enterprise Services, 6700 S. Topeka Blvd., "J" Street, Bldg. 283

Kansas Health Care Commission

When: Tues., Jan. 26, 1:30 p.m.

Location: KPERS Board room, 611 S. Kansas Ave.

Senate Panel Advances Allison, Reed Confirmations

The Kansas Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee voted Wednesday, Jan. 20, to recommend confirmation of Dr. Andrew Allison as Executive Director of the Kansas Health Policy Authority and Dr. William Reed as a member of the KHPA Board. The committee's recommendation now goes to the full Senate. The panel held a hearing on the two nominations Tuesday, Jan. 19.

Allison has been serving as Acting Executive Director since May 2009 when he was appointed by the Board to succeed former Executive Director Dr. Marcia Nielsen. Before that, he had served as Deputy Director since 2005 and as the state's Medicaid Director during much of that time. He holds a Ph.D. in economics, a master's degree in public policy and a bachelor's degree in history.

Dr. Reed is Chairman of the Department of Cardiovascular Diseases at the University of Kansas Hospital in Kansas City, Kansas. He received his medical degree from Indiana University and completed post-graduate work at the University of Kansas. He was nominated to the Board by Senate President Steve Morris to succeed former Board member Ned Holland.

Stimulus Grant to Fund HIT Planning in Kansas

The Kansas Health Policy Authority has been awarded a \$1.7 million grant to develop a plan for deploying Health Information Technology (HIT) in the Kansas Medicaid program.

The grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and will cover 90 percent of the cost of the planning process.

"The real goal here is to improve the quality of health care in Kansas and to improve health care outcomes," said Dr. Barb Langner, Acting Medicaid Director at KHPA. "When your health care providers have secure access to your records, it's easier for them to give the right kind of care. Putting these records in electronic form makes it possible to review records for missing treatments and to improve prevention. It also makes it easier for providers to avoid duplication and avoid costly mistakes like prescribing the wrong medication. So in the end, it not only improves quality, but it can also lower costs."

In 2009, Gov. Mark Parkinson named Health and Environment Secretary Rod Bremby to lead the statewide HIT planning effort. KHPA, along with a broad group of stakeholders, participates in an advisory group to help identify barriers to the use of HIT, including the need to ensure privacy and security in personal health records.

KHPA Pulse is a publication by the KHPA Communications Team distributed weekly during the legislative session and less frequently when the legislature is not in session. If you have questions or comments, contact the Public Information Officer Peter Hancock at 785/296.5603 or peter.hancock@khpas.gov